



Joan McDonald
Commissioner



State of Connecticut
Department of Economic and
Community Development

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSING COMMITTEE
March 4, 2010

Joan McDonald, Commissioner
Department of Economic and Community Development

***SB 321 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE'S CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR HOUSING
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT***

The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) offers the following comments in **SUPPORT** of *Senate Bill 321 An Act Concerning the State's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development*.

DECD recognizes that housing is both an economic and a socio-economic driver, and the availability of quality affordable housing is critical to Connecticut's future economic growth. We also recognize the importance of strategic planning. However, preparing the long-range state housing plan is redundant and duplicative. During this time of unprecedented fiscal constraints it is imperative that we eliminate redundant and/or duplicative efforts.

Connecticut, through DECD, is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to prepare, every five years, a comprehensive strategic plan for housing and community development for the state. This plan is a required part of receiving annual funding under four federal programs - the Small Cities CDBG program, the HOME Investment Partnership program, the Emergency Shelter Grant program and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS program. This comprehensive plan includes a statewide housing needs assessment and market analysis as well as a strategic plan for housing and community development.

Additionally, an analysis of housing needs and the state's housing market as well as an analysis of housing's economic and socio-economic implications, challenges and opportunities are required elements—as they should be—of the state economic strategic plan, which is pursuant to Section 32-1o of the general statutes. Further, DECD is required, as part of its annual report, in accordance with Section 32-1m of the general statutes, to provide among other things, an assessment of the state's housing market; a comprehensive assessment of current and future needs for rental assistance under section 8-119kk for housing projects for the elderly and disabled; an analysis of the progress of the public and private sectors toward meeting housing needs in the state; using building permit data from the United States Census Bureau and demolition data from Connecticut municipalities, a list of municipalities that meet the affordable

housing criteria set forth in subsection (k) of section 8-30g (affordable housing appeals act); and an analysis of the state-funded housing development portfolio of the department.

By this legislation, DECD is proposing that the State Long Range Housing Plan be eliminated and the HUD required Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development serve as the official state housing plan. Additionally, DECD will continue to work with the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority and other partners when preparing this housing report.

As you can see, the state's housing situation is thoroughly analyzed and reported on annually and a comprehensive statewide housing plan is prepared every five years. As such the long-range state housing plan is redundant and duplicative. Time and money spent preparing this plan could be put to other uses, and repealing the long-range state housing plan will not have an effect on strategic planning.

Attached for the Committee's convenience is a matrix that shows DECD's current reporting requirements. The column on the left shows the State Long Range Housing Plan, and as you scroll across from left to right, you will see the additional five reports DECD must prepare. Columns marked with "Yes" show where the duplication is occurring.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and we would welcome the opportunity to assist the committee in any way possible with this bill.

DECD Housing Reports

State Long Range Housing Plan		Consolidated Plan For Housing and Community Development	Connecticut Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing	Annual Performance Evaluation Report	DECD Annual Report	State Economic Strategic Plan
		94 CFR Part 91 Due to HUD every 5 years	94 CFR Part 91 Due to HUD every 5 years	94 CFR Part 91 Due to HUD Annually	CGS 32-1m Due to Legislature Annually	CGS 32-10 Due to Legislature every 5 years
a	CGS 8-37t					
	Not later than January 1, 2000, and every five years thereafter, the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development together with the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, shall prepare a long-range state housing plan, which shall conform and be subject to the plan of conservation and development for the state adopted by the General Assembly.					
	1) Contain an assessment of the housing needs of households with incomes less than one hundred per cent of the average area median income, adjusted for family size, analyzed separately for households with incomes	YES			YES	YES
	A less than twenty-five per cent of the area median income	YES				
	B more than twenty-five per cent but not more than fifty per cent of the area median income	YES				
	C more than fifty per cent but not more than eighty per cent of the area median income	YES				
	D more than eighty per cent but not more than one hundred per cent of the area median income	YES				
	2) analyze the households served by the housing construction, substantial rehabilitation, purchase and rental assistance programs, including the number of households served by each program, the total amount of financial assistance provided to such households and the race of households served under such programs			YES	YES	
	3) provide information on affirmative fair housing marketing activities and programs and an analysis of occupancy results of affirmative fair housing marketing plans and shall include data on the racial composition of the occupants and persons on the waiting list of each housing project which is assisted under any housing program established by the general statutes or special act or which is supervised by the commissioner or the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority	YES	YES	YES	YES	
	4) set specific measurable goals for meeting identified housing needs	YES			YES	YES
b	5) outline strategies for meeting those goals; and	YES			YES	
	6) identify state, federal and private sector resources for affordable housing programs. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to require an occupant or applicant to disclose the race of such occupant or applicant on an application or survey form. The long-range plan shall be updated annually by an action plan that assesses the state's progress toward meeting housing needs contained in the long-range plan and recommends revised strategies, if deemed necessary. In preparing the long-range plan and subsequent action plans, the commissioner shall consult with representatives of those who use or benefit from state housing programs	YES				YES
	The Department of Economic and Community Development shall submit the long-range housing plan to the General Assembly not later than January 1, 2000, and each action plan not later than January first of each subsequent year, after receiving public review and comment on the long-range plan and each action plan through written remarks and public hearings. The commencement date of each plan shall be the July first following the submission of the plan.	Yes			YES	

